

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 04035 150632Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 SSM-05 HA-05 SAA-01 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 /080 W
-----037967 150640Z /16

P 150541Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8788
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN
USICA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 4035

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SOPN, SY, LE, US
SUBJ: SYRIAN PRESS ATTACKS POSITION OF US AND WESTERN MEDIA ON
LEBANON

1. SYRIAN EDITORIAL COMMENT JULY 14 DISPLAYS EXTREME TESTINESS
WITH WESTERN PRESS COVERAGE OF EVENTS IN LEBANON AND ONE
EDITORIAL CALL FOR ARABS TO ADOPT ANTI-US STAND.

2. EDITORIAL IN TISHRIIN SHOWS SENSITIVITY TO CHARGE
THAT SYRIA IS ATTACKING LEBANESE CHRISTIANS. IT IS AT
GREAT PAINS TO PROVE THAT SYRIA'S FIGHT IS NOT WITH THE
CHRISTIANS BUT WITH THE CHAMOUNISTS AND THE PHALANGE WHO,
IT CLAIMS, REPRESENT ONLY A MINORITY OF LEBANESE CHRISTIANS
AND, SPECIFICALLY, MARONITE CHRISTIANS. COLUMN ASKS
WHY WESTERN PRESS HAS NOT REPORTED ON STATEMENTS OF
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GREEK ORTHODOX AND GREEK CATHOLIC PATRIARCHS DEFENDING
SYRIA'S POLICY IN LEBANON. IT ARGUES THAT IT IS UNFAIR TO
EQUATE ARAB DETERRENT FORCES WHICH ACT ON BEHALF OF THE
LEGAL AUTHORITY WITH "ARMED GANGS" WHO OPPOSE THAT AUTHORITY.
COLUMN REFERS TO A LARGE SILENT MAJORITY IN LEBANON WHICH
OPPOSES THE RIGHTIST MILITIAS AND CLAIMS THAT RECENT EVENTS
NO LONGER PERMIT THEM TO KEEP SILENT.

3. THE SYRIAN PARESS IS ALSO FILLED WITH SHORT ARTICLES ABOUT LEBANESE PARTIES AND ORGANIZATION WHO HAVE SENT DELEGATIONS TO DAMASCUS TO EXPRESS THEIR SUPPORT FOR SYRIA'S ROLE THERE. FONMIN KHADDAM IS REPORTED AS HAVING MET WITH SEVERAL LEBANESE NASSERITE GROUPS AND A DELEGATION FORM "THE LEBANESE MOVEMENT." IN ANOTHER EFFORT TO BOLSTER SYRIA'S LEGITIMACY, FRANGIEH'S COMMENT ON CHAMOUN'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT SARKIS IS GIVEN FRONT PAGE TREATMENT. PRESS CONTINUES TO ATTACK THE RIGHTIST MILITIAS IN EXTREMELY STRONG TERMS. FRONT PAGE THAWRA EDITORIAL ENTITLED: "THE LEBANESE AND THE PATH OF DELIVERANCE" INDICATES THAT THE LEBANESE ARE FACED WITH THE CHOICE OF FOLLOWING AN ARAB NATIONALIST LINE OR FOLLOWING "TRAITORS AND HIRELINGS INTO PARTITION." IT SAYS THAT IS IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE "NATIONALIST LINE TO BE RECONCILED WITH TREASON AND CONSPIRACY." IT CLAIMS THAT THE LEBANESE ARE DEPENDING UPON SYRIA TO COMPLETE THE PROCESS OF SECURITY AND STABILITY. MEANWHILE AL-BAATH EDITORIAL LASHES OUT AGAINST US ON THIS ISSURE IN ATYPICAL FASHION. REFERRING TO A CONSPIRACY AGAINST SYRIA'S ROLE IN LEBANON, IT SAYS THE ARAB NATIONALIST PROGRESSIVE FORCE SHOULD ADOPT ONE STAND "HOSTILE TO THE AMERICAN DESIGN IN BOTH WORD AND DEED."

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DAMASC04035
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780290-0600
Format: TEL
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780757/aaaabvsc.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 10d60773-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1998114
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SYRIAN PRESS ATTACKS POSITION OF US AND WESTERN MEDIA ON LEBANON
TAGS: SOPN, SY, LE, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/10d60773-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014